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***NOTE:** To provide a more complete picture of Atlantic City's tourism business climate, the Atlantic City Tourism District, with the cooperation and assistance of agencies and businesses within the District, provides this monthly tourism barometer and analysis, showing results for several important non-gaming indicators. An archive of monthly barometers is available at <http://www.doatlanticcity.com/about/stats.aspx>. Please note that some data presented during each month's initial release is unaudited and may be changed when finalized. If so, results will be updated in the online archive.*

## **Atlantic City Non-Casino Business Holds Steady in July While Visitor Interest Remains Strong**

**(Atlantic City, NJ, August 10, 2012)** – Despite gaming volumes struggling due to regional competition, Atlantic City's non-gaming indicators are pointing up.

Once again, use of the Atlantic City Convention & Visitor Authority's (ACCVA) official tourism information Web site, [www.doatlanticcity.com](http://www.doatlanticcity.com), provides a picture of a robust interest in visitation. The site logged more than 440,000 unique visitors in July, a 20% increase from last July. Year-to-date 2012 figures are 24% higher than the same period in 2011. New visitors to the site are up 16% from last July and up 23% year-to-date over 2011. The site also received more than 1,200 new requests for the ACCVA's electronic newsletters and more than 4,000 requests for visitor guides, both up substantially from last July and year-to-date.

The ACCVA's Facebook page continues its astronomical increase, with nearly 30,000 new "Likes" this July as opposed to 1,900 in July 2011. Total "Likes" to date have climbed by 428% year-to-date this year over the same period in 2011. ACCVA officials attribute the surge to a combination of a popular ACCVA Facebook ticket give-away contest and the new "Do AC" marketing campaign.

ACCVA officials note that 66% of the visitors to the site in June 2012 were new visitors, indicating strong interest from a potential new market. Web users opting to receive regular e-newsletters about Atlantic City marked a 317% increase year-to-date over the same period in 2011.

The ACCVA's Visitor Welcome Centers on the Atlantic City Expressway and in Boardwalk Hall report serving nearly 82,000 visitors so far this year, a 7% increase over the year-to-date figures for 2011. The professional information counselors also answered more than 6,000 inquiries by phone year-to-date, a 15% increase over year-to-date 2011.

Unaudited figures from the South Jersey Transportation Authority (SJTA) report that scheduled deplanements at the Atlantic City International Airport are up 2.14% year-to-date. While Air Tran discontinued service earlier this year, Spirit Airlines added capacity.

According to Jeff Vasser, president of the ACCVA, “It’s important to realize that aspects of Atlantic City other than gambling remain highly popular. Our restaurants and showrooms are bustling. Our nightclubs are major draws for a younger crowd that some people don’t associate with Atlantic City. The showrooms have been bringing an amazing assortment of entertainment, with the major concert tours making stops at Boardwalk Hall and other venues around the city. Hotel business is very strong throughout the year, showing that visitors are staying longer to experience all the attractions and activities we’ve added over the last few years. These continued increases in interest from new visitors are positive signs that Atlantic City is being viewed as a full destination resort.”

Spectrum Gaming Group provides the following additional insight to factors impacting July’s business climate:

“On a year-over-year calendar-day basis, July 2012 had two less “weekend” days (Fridays, Saturdays, and Sundays) compared to July 2011 – as July 2012 had one less Friday and Saturday than prior year (conversely, July 2012 had two more weekdays). The Independence Day holiday fell on a weekday in both years - July 4<sup>th</sup> last year fell on a Monday, which lends itself to a four-day weekend, while the holiday this year was on Wednesday.

“Despite a less favorable year-over-year calendar comparative, positive notes included relatively pleasant weather in the region, which tends to foster more visits to the region. The average price for a gallon of gas was lower than in previous months and prior year, and Atlantic City had considerably more public events at its casinos than in prior year.

“According to the National Weather Service, the average temperature for July reported at Atlantic City was 78.5 degrees Fahrenheit, which was cooler than July of last year (at 81 degrees). There were 14 days in July 2012 where the temperature exceeded 90 degrees compared to 20 days in prior year. In terms of precipitation, last month was drier than July of last year and drier than normal (3.38 inches of precipitation vs. a normal value of 3.04 inches and last year’s amount of 4.15 inches), while only four days during the month had considerable levels of precipitation (a quarter-inch or more) compared to three days in July of last year. More than one-quarter inch of rainfall occurred on three days impacting two of the four weekend periods in July 2012, while there were three such days impacting three of five weekend periods in July last year.

“Weekly average gas prices in the region have been decreasing each month since peaking in early April. For July 2012, the average retail price for a gallon of gas the region (at \$3.40) was down 6.2 percent from a year ago and down 2.8 percent from a month earlier, June 2012.

“Overall, there were 74 public events held at Atlantic City’s casinos in July 2012, versus 40 comparable events in July 2011, an increase of 85 percent. Additionally, July marked the third full month in which the Atlantic City Alliance’s “Do AC” advertising campaign was in effect.”

The figures quoted above and others are available in the monthly Tourism Barometer, available online at <http://www.doatlanticcity.com/about/stats.aspx>.

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The Atlantic City Convention & Visitors Authority serves as the destination's principal marketing arm, stimulating economic growth through convention, business and leisure tourism development. The Authority oversees the management of the Atlantic City Convention Center and Boardwalk Hall. The Authority is the first destination marketing organization in New Jersey to achieve prestigious Destination Marketing Accreditation by the Destination Marketing Association International. For complete Atlantic City information, visit [www.doatlanticcity.com](http://www.doatlanticcity.com). Also follow us on Facebook at [www.facebook.com/AtlanticCityNJ](https://www.facebook.com/AtlanticCityNJ).